DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 297 095 CE 050 572

AUTHOR Thiel, Kathleen K.
TITLE Opinions of Ohio Public School Superintendents about Issues in Adult Education in Relation to Selected Personal and Programmatic Variables. Executive Summary.
SPONS AGENCY Buckeye Association of School Administrators, Westerville, OH.
PUB DATE 25 Jan 88
NOTE 5p.; Also sponsored by the Ohio Association for Adult and Continuing Education.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Attitudes; Adult Basic Education; *Adult Education; *Educational Attitudes; Educational Benefits; Educational Finance; *Educational Philosophy; High School Equivalency Programs; Postsecondary Education; *School Role; *Superintendents
IDENTIFIERS *Ohio

ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to assess the opinions of Ohio public school superintendents about the issues of (1) the mission of public schools regarding adult education; (2) the nature of adult education funding; and (3) the benefits accrued to the local school district as a result of adult education programs. A survey form was developed and mailed to 697 superintendents in Ohio during the 1986-87 academic year; responses were received from 606 superintendents (87 percent). Analysis of the data collected showed that (1) superintendents were ambivalent regarding the mission of public school systems in serving as providers of adult education, with the philosophical support for public school adult education that does exist often tempered by concerns for funding; (2) superintendents approached mild agreement on the role of educational entitlements in serving as providers of adult education; and (3) superintendents agree more on the issue of benefits as a result of adult education than on mission and funding. Recommendations were made for professional associations of school superintendents to promote the role of adult education and to call for free education for adults who have not completed basic and/or high school education. (KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED297095

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

OPINIONS OF OHIO PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS ABOUT ISSUES IN ADULT EDUCATION IN RELATION TO SELECTED PERSONAL AND PROGRAMMATIC VARIABLES

Kathleen K. Thiel, Ph.D.

January 25, 1988

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

K Thiel

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

The researcher expresses appreciation to the **Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA)** and the **Ohio Association for Adult and Continuing Education (OAACE)** for their support and sponsorship of this study.

CE050572

Introduction

Adult education is increasingly on the agendas of private and public agencies, educational institutions, professional associations, and state and federal agencies. Since a legislative enactment in 1839, adult education has existed in Ohio's public schools in varying degrees and with varying levels of financial and administrative support.

Purpose

To assess the opinions of Ohio public school superintendents about the issues of (1) the mission of public schools regarding adult education, (2) the nature of adult education funding, and (3) the benefits accrued the local school district as a result of adult education programs.

Population

697 city, exempted village, local, county, and joint vocational superintendents employed in Ohio during the 1986-87 academic year.

Analysis and Findings

Based on responses from 606 superintendents (86.7%).

Means were calculated to determine superintendents' opinions on the three issues regarding adult education:

- Superintendents were ambivalent regarding the mission of public school systems in serving as providers of adult education. The philosophical support for public school adult education that does exist is often tempered by concerns for funding.

- Superintendents approached mild agreement on the role of educational entitlements in serving as providers of adult education.

- Superintendents agree more on the issue of benefits as a result of adult education than on mission and funding.

- Opinion statements were correlated with the personal variables of the respondents':

1. Enrollment and enrollment of immediate family members in adult education... 193 superintendents reported a history of enrollment in adult education courses and 214 reported involvement of immediate family members in adult education. There was low association between superintendents' personal enrollment and enrollment of family members in adult education and the mission domain.

2. Administrative experience in adult education... 254 superintendents reported direct administrative experience in adult education. There was low association between superintendents' administrative experiences in adult education and the mission domain.

3. Number of years served as superintendent in the present district... Superintendents served an average of 5.8 years in their present positions. There was a negligible association between the years served and the mission domain.

- Opinion statements were correlated with the programmatic variables of:

1. The presence of adult education within the district... 329 Ohio superintendents reported the presence of adult education with their districts. The presence of adult education within the district was more closely associated with the mission domain than with the funding and benefit domains.

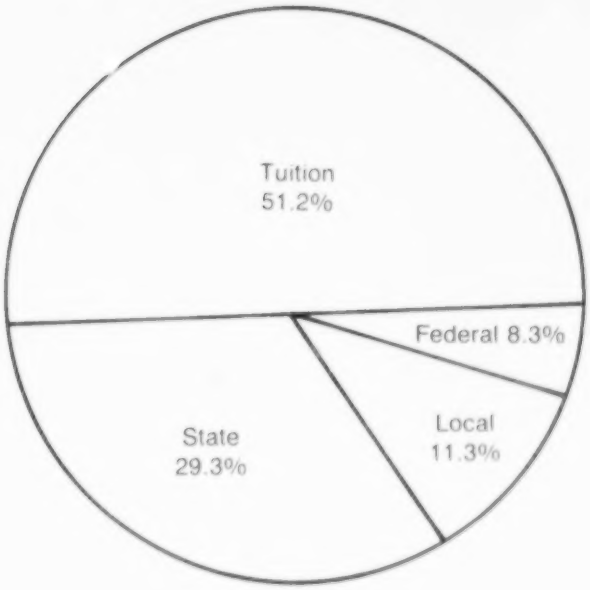
TYPES OF ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN DISTRICTS REPORTING THE PRESENCE OF ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS (N = 329)

Type		Frequency	Percentage
Adult Basic Education/ Literacy	Yes	267	81.1
	No	62	18.9
Vocational Education	Yes	156	47.4
	No	173	52.6
High School Completion	Yes	80	24.3
	No	249	75.7
Citizenship Education	Yes	43	13.0
	No	286	87.0
Leisure Time	Yes	204	62.0
	No	125	38.0
Continuing Education	Yes	143	43.5
	No	186	56.5
High School Equivalency	Yes	165	50.2
	No	164	49.8

2. The percent of time devoted to administration of adult education by the designated administrator... The administration of adult education within the public school setting is tangential to the administration of the K-12 operation. This was moderately associated with the mission domain.

3. The presence of adult education prior to the employment of the superintendent... The existence of the majority of adult education programs preceded the employment of the present superintendent. There was negative, negligible association between this variable and the benefit domain.

4. The percent of funding derived from local, state, and federal taxes, and tuition... The major source of funding for adult education is tuition payments. Superintendents expressed the feeling that "Adults should not become another drain on the public tax dollars." The support of adult education by tuition payments was negatively associated with superintendents' opinions on all domains.



PERCENTAGE OF FUNDING BY CATEGORY FOR ADULT EDUCATION
AS REPORTED BY 254 SUPERINTENDENTS

This research resulted in recommendations for numerous audiences which included: providers of adult and continuing education, the Ohio Department of Education, the Governor of Ohio, institutions of higher education, and the Ohio General Assembly. The recommendations specific to professional associations follow:

Recommendations

- The Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA) and the Ohio Association for Adult and Continuing Education (OAACE) should be used as a vehicle to promulgate the role of adult education within the public school setting.

- BASA and OAACE should establish a dialogue to explore philosophical issues regarding public school adult education and should nurture strategies for making recommendations for the enhancement and establishment of public school adult education.

- BASA and OAACE should serve as advocates for adult education by calling on the Ohio General Assembly to enact legislation to provide for entitlements of 2000 clock hours of education on a tuition-free basis to Ohioans to complete their basic educations and/or their high school educations.

Summary Statement

Adult education in the United States emerged from the societal consciousness of the nation which stressed the maintenance of a trained and educated work force, a democratic form of government, quality of life, and economic viabil ity. It is significant that the mission of public school adult education as cited by the superintendents in this research bears little relationship to the concerns which originally nurtured the reasons for implementation. The findings of this study in 1987 demonstrate limited progress in the history of public school adult education and substantiates findings and statements reported in the literature. Rather than arising from societal needs, the mission of public school adult education is generated from self-serving benefits to the district, and the funding is tied to maintaining a solvent K-12 operations